



Cultural Action Plan
Steering Committee Minutes
November 15, 2007

The Salisbury City Council adopted a Resolution of Intent September 4, 2007, to adopt a goal to investigate and create a Cultural Action Plan. On November 15, 2007, a Council-appointed steering committee met in the Council Chamber at 217 South Main Street to further this goal.

In attendance were: Mayor Susan Kluttz, Councilman Mark Lewis, Joe Morris (Staff Liaison), Mary Berryman Agard (Consultant), Diana Moghrabi (Secretary) Sarah Hensley, Mark Ritchie, Cheryl Goins, Connie Baker, Marietta Smith, Faleese Jenkins, Joanne Harrison, Betz Bigelow, Lynn Raker, Barbara Perry, James Donaldson, Phillip Burgess, Sarah Hall, Katie Lipscomb, James Meacham, Foster Owen, Eleanor Qadirah, Ed Norvell, Paul Fisher, David Setzer, Gail Elder White, and Doug Paris. Rose Meeks Jones, Michelle d’Hemecourt and David Fish were not able to attend the meeting.

Lunch was provided, along with notebooks containing copies of the City Council Resolution of Intent, the committee’s job description, a timeline, a sample survey, five recommendation forms, a copy of the *Cultural Resource Inventory*, and a contact sheet. (Please make any personal changes to the contact sheet and submit them to the secretary.) Joanne Harrison contributed a cultural resource listing. Joe Morris offered an invocation.

Mayor Kluttz made opening remarks thanking the committee for their commitment to help make this a top priority for the Salisbury/Rowan community. She remarked that the City Manager does a good job overseeing city services (like leaf collections) that then allows the opportunity for our City Council to address social issues (like race relations). Committees such as this help Salisbury “study to succeed.”

Mark Lewis also thanked the committee for their commitment and introduced the consultant.

For over two decades, Mary Berryman Agard has consulted in cultural and strategic planning, foundation management, civic dialog, donor advising, and non-profit management. Her recent projects include advising in the redesign of a major local public arts agency, identifying and evaluating applicants for public funding initiatives, conducting community cultural plans, facilitating a national coalition, and assisting in the redesign of a national foundation. Her work has addressed a variety of topics including arts and culture, environmental preservation and restoration, sustainable agriculture, verified voting systems, social and economic justice, and education.

Mary Berryman Agard has a website: <http://www.maryberrymanagard.com/>

Mark Lewis and Joe Morris attended a three-day conference in Charlotte titled “Cultivating Creative Communities” where Mary Berryman Agard was a panelist making a presentation. Mary is working with Mecklenburg communities outside of Charlotte. She has personal ties in North Carolina.

Mark Lewis believes that, “The future is dependent on how we interact with one another. Salisbury’s culture can break down the barriers that separate us.”

Mary Berryman Agard then discussed the meaning of culture as defined by the Cultural Planning Guidelines issued by the New South Wales Ministry of the Arts. “Culture in its widest sense is about what matters to people and communities. It is about relationships, shared memories and experiences. It is about identity, history, and a sense of place. It is about the different cultural and religious backgrounds found in most communities. It is about the things we consider valuable for passing on to future generations. It is our way of connecting the present with the past and the future.”

A cultural action plan is a lot like an economic development plan or a physical plan. “Cultural planning is a systematic public exploration of an area’s arts and cultural aspirations, assets and needs. Cultural planning is an examination of the ways in which arts and cultural commerce, creation, and programs can contribute to broad civic goals. It is the development of shared, sustainable, and equitable strategies to help achieve those aspirations.” It presents opportunities, and addresses pressing community issues. Culture is defined locally.

Mary observed that Salisbury has a refined sense of its history and an understanding of how history relates to the community’s economics. She reviewed the Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan and stated that it is the best comprehensive plan she had ever read. Several times the plan mentions children who are our future. There are already cross-cultural and branding efforts in our community.

Each individual member of the steering committee made their introductions and said something about their connections and artistic passions. After the introductions Mary asked to extend the agenda by 15 minutes.

Short review of introductions: (Secretary has inserted email links for your convenience)

Mayor Susan Kluttz shared that she was interested in ballet when she was young. She served as the first president of the Rowan Arts Council. Mayor Kluttz is a former art student, former board member of the Symphony Guild and Waterworks Visual Arts Center. She knows the history of the community’s arts organizations.
<http://www.salisburync.gov>

- Joe Morris (Staff liaison for this committee), Planning and Community Development Manager. <http://www.salisburync.gov/lm%26d/>
- Diana Moghrabi (Secretary) is a former Business Manager for Piedmont Players Theatre, taught dance at Charlotte’s Community School of the Arts and Arthur Murray Dance Studio, performed as a character with the Charlotte Youth Ballet, and worked stage door and front-of-house for the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in Charlotte.

- Dr. Sarah Hensley is Director of Elementary Education for the Rowan/Salisbury School System. She has been a key force behind the students' participation in downtown tours and their attendance to the youth productions at Piedmont Players Theatre. Dr. Hensley is an artist in her own right, and is presently working on a joint art project for students and the Public Art Committee. <http://www.rss.k12.nc.us/>
- Mark Ritchie is a supporter of the arts who is currently on a path as a lay pastor. Mr. Ritchie recently retired from Cheerwine Bottling. He is the in-coming chair for the Center for Faith & the Arts. His family has multi-generational heritage investment in Rowan County. <http://www.faihart.org/>
- Cheryl Goins is a potter who moved to Salisbury seven years ago and teaches at Waterworks Visual Arts Center. She and her husband are currently developing a live/work/sales space in downtown Salisbury. <http://www.waterworks.org/>
- Connie Baker is an artist and her husband, Michael, is a sculptor with 20 years of experience. They are some of the founding members of the East Square Artworks group. Connie, Michael, Syed and Whitney have renovated the old Flowers Bakery as their living space and art studios. <http://eastsquareartworks.com/>
- Marietta Smith is glad that Salisbury acknowledges the link between arts and economic development. She has a background in arts administration and is a visual artist that owns the Railway Studios space. Marietta is the current executive director at the Rowan Arts Council. <http://www.rowanarts.org/>
- Faleese Jenkins is the wife (First Lady) of the current president of Livingstone College. She is the mother of a visual artist and two other children. She is a former public school teacher who has been involved with all the arts over time. <http://www.livingstone.edu/>
- Joanne Harrison is the wife of the current pastor of A.M.E. Soldiers Memorial Church. She loves music and composing. She holds degrees in music performance from Howard University. She does lots of music at Livingstone College, teaches piano and organ and serves as a vocal coach. Did we mention that she loves music?
- Betz Bigelow is the project manager for Downtown Salisbury, Inc. She has a background in Asheville theatre and is interested in the healing arts. <http://www.downtownsalisburyinc.com/>
- Lynn Raker, Senior Planner, is a member of the city staff. She is as an urban design planner who also staffs the Community Appearance Commission (CAC). She has experience with public art and has been very involved with the Public Art Committee.

- Barbara Perry is the Chair of Salisbury's Public Art Committee and Community Appearance Commission. She has been on many community boards including 16 years on the Salisbury Symphony Board. Barbara sings in St. Luke's choir and values diversity. She sees arts as central and is concerned about school arts cuts. <http://www.salisburync.gov/lm&d/cac/communityappearance.html>
- James Donaldson has had a long and successful career as an artist and teacher. He is grateful for the strong support from the community. He played a part in the growth of the Art Guild and its role in the formation of the Waterworks Visual Arts Center. http://www.museums.udel.edu/jones/archive/archive_pages/artist_pages/donaldson.html
- Phillip Burgess is the music director at St. Luke's church. He has produced inter-church concerts that include Anglo, African American, and Hispanic communities. <http://stlukessalisbury.net/>
- Sarah Hall currently writes for the *Salisbury Post*, is the music director for the Salisbury-Rowan Choir and the new Amadeus Children's Choir. Sarah is a former middle and elementary school music teacher and former Executive Director of the Salisbury Symphony. <http://www.salisburypost.com/>
- Katie Lipscomb is an attorney at Doran Shelby Pethel & Hudson. She is a former arts student with deep roots in the community.
- James Meacham is the executive director of the Rowan Tourism Development Authority; Rowan Convention and Visitors Bureau is a co-sponsor of this plan because the organization sees arts as key to tourism development. <http://www.visitsalisburync.com/>
- Foster Owen is the former Assistant City Manager--retired. He has served on many boards including Waterworks Visual Arts Center and Piedmont Players Theatre. He participated in the first Catawba College capital campaign.
- Eleanor Qadirah is the founder of the Rowan Blues and Jazz Festival and number one community volunteer. <http://www.rowanbluesandjazz.com/>
- Edward Norvell is an attorney. He has served/s on many boards including Downtown Salisbury Inc., Rowan Museum, Waterworks Visual Arts Center, and Piedmont Players Theatre. Mr. Norvell is associated with the Proctor Family Foundation.
- Paul Fisher, Chair and CEO of F & M Bank, believes the arts are critical to the success of the community. <http://www.fmbnc.com/>

- David Setzer, Executive Director of the Blanche and Julian Robertson Family Foundation, is a former Catawba College communication professional. His wife is on the Waterworks Visual Arts Center Board. He has been long associated with the Salisbury Symphony <http://www.robertsonfoundation.org/history.html>
- Gail Elder White is a former member of the Piedmont Players Theatre Board of Governors and is currently the director of Salisbury Parks and Recreation. <http://www.salisburync.gov/pkrec/>
- Doug Paris is the newly hired Assistant to the City Manager and one of the authors of the “Salisbury Cultural Inventory” that is found in the notebooks distributed to the CAP Steering Committee members.

The committee brainstormed the following two lists.

WHAT ARE THE MOST POWERFUL ATTRIBUTES SHAPING CULTURAL ACTIVITY IN OUR COMMUNITY?

- Purpose for a fulfilling life
- Activists, leadership
- Great volunteer base
- Individual passion
- Educational community
- Four colleges
- Great Mayor
- Continuous public planning process
- Very pretty county
- Cultural literacy high
- Strong presence of downtown
- Churches and social ministries
- Diverse community
- Water (there must be something special in our water)
- Refined citizenry
- People want to get along
- Attractive appearance
- Environmental issues (Catawba/Food Lion)
- Corporate citizenship
- History of affirmative race relations
- Good newspaper
- “Can do” attitude
- History of accomplishment

- Active downtown business community
- Size-connected community
- Strong artist community
- Physical cultural resources
- Strong, socially active faith community (community & schools)
- Strong civic groups
- Private sector driven
- Public /private partnerships
- Visionary, cooperative local government
- Resources are here in Rowan county
- Location
- Philanthropy & giving
- Many small foundations
- Bankers
- History & preservation
- City services
- The City is an excellent partner

WHO IS MISSING FROM THIS STEERING COMMITTEE?

- Latino representation
- Designers
- Gay and Lesbian Business Alliance
- PFLAG (Parents, Friends and Family of Lesbians and Gays)
- Realtors
- SURGE
- Downtown Merchants
- Lower Economic Group
- North Main Neighborhood
- Underserved youth
- Senior artists

Paul Fisher said there is a great deal of artistic work “not done on proper surfaces.” An outlet needs to be found for these works.

Joe Morris reviewed the timetable for this committee, which is included in the notebooks. A report will be submitted to City Council at the retreat in February 2008 so they will have a concept of preliminary budget requirements. **The next meeting of the Cultural Action Plan Steering Committee will be January 7, 2008.** The plan is to have three steering committee meetings, individual interviews, etc. The steering committee will be involved “hands-on” in designing a community event. What this committee is doing will greatly improve Salisbury.

The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.

HOMEWORK

- Steering Committee Members are asked to review the Job Description for their work provided. (see notebook)
- Each Steering Committee Member is asked to submit the names of five individuals to include in interviews or small group meetings during the planning process using the Recommendation Forms provided. These recommendations should be returned to Joe Morris at City Hall, 217 S. Main Street Salisbury NC 28144 by Dec. 1, 2007. As a reminder, it is not necessary to recommend staff from well-known local arts and cultural organizations, as we have lists of those individuals already. However, if you are aware of small, new, or less well-known arts and cultural organizations, please do help us include representatives of those groups. Remember that consumers, neighborhood representatives, business leaders, philanthropists, and educators concerned with the arts and culture make good referrals. Help us create a diverse group of people from whom to learn.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Moghrabi
Secretary

***The next meeting of the Cultural Action Plan Steering Committee will be January 7, 2008, at noon, at City Hall, 217 S. Main Street. Lunch will be provided.**